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ABSTRACT

The objectives of a research project were to: (1) give an account of the adult literacy movement in New Zealand between 1974 and 1988; (2) gather, analyze, and report on the number of students in adult literacy programs between 1974 and 1987; (3) examine the nature of adult literacy programs; (4) describe the development of funding arrangements of local coordinators; (5) explore the role of national coordination; (6) identify bicultural and multicultural emphasis in adult literacy; (7) investigate how computer technology influences adult literacy work; (8) explicate the benefits of adult literacy programs during 1974 to 1988; and (9) provide recommendations. Based on several Adult Reading and Learning Assistance (ARLA) Federation national surveys, 12,117 students and 8,108 tutors were involved in the adult literacy movement between 1974 to 1987. Several questionnaires collected historical and statistical data from program coordinators. Additional surveys collected information on the use of computers in adult literacy programs and on the literacy levels of prison inmates. Descriptive information was obtained from case studies. (Twenty references, a list of project files, and notes are included. Appendices contain: (1) unofficial records of reading programs, 1979-1984; (2) notes on background to National Council of Adult Education involvement with adult literacy movement, June 1979; (3) list of questions sent to all programs; (4) breakdown of the 1988 Timaru statistics; and (5) the ARLA Federation computer survey questionnaire.) (NLA)

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THE ADULT LITERACY MOVEMENT IN NEW ZEALAND:

ITS RISE AND DEVELOPMENT

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The Adult Literacy Movement in New Zealand:

Its Rise and Development

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New Zealand Council for Educational Research
Wellington
1990

New Zealand Council
for Educational Research
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Wellington

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I would also like to acknowledge the work of Ruth Gilmore, Cherry Hill, Dorothy Taylor, Sara Newman and Annette Nixon, who all provided me with clear, analysed statistical data and gave me permission to use their work. In this respect, Jonquil Brooks, Executive Officer of ARLA, and Carole Galloway, National Training Officer of ARLA, deserve my thanks for their support and helpful comments on the manuscript.

Thanks are also due to co-ordinators and past co-ordinators of adult literacy programmes. Their help was unstinting and I had unrestricted access to their confidential files and papers. This trust is mirrored in a document that refers to all extant figures on adult literacy for the period 1974-1988.

Greater trust was placed in me by the three students who agreed to place their comments on the worth of adult literacy work in their lives on record. I guaranteed their anonymity, and so have changed their names. Bill, Christine and Sam - thank you for sharing your thoughts and feelings with me, and thank you for allowing me to publish them. When all the testing and counting is complete, you are the only people able to assess whether the struggle to establish an adult literacy movement in New Zealand has been worth the effort.

Kathy Hill

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

During 1986 the Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation (N.Z.) Inc. (ARLA) made a decision to compile a history of the adult reading movement since its inception in New Zealand in 1974[1]. At the time there was the realisation that key figures in the movement were growing older or moving out of the literacy field and the lessons to be learnt from their experiences needed to be recorded for posterity.

Adult literacy had been a relatively hight profile political issue during the 1970's and 1980's. Community volunteers and professional educators became aware of the poor reading skills of many adults in New Zealand. Adult literacy programmes (defined below) developed as a community solution to a community problem. Such programmes were not politically acceptable to the New Zealand governments of the time which felt that adult literacy programmes challenged the very basis of the compulsory school system in this country. It was only with the large rise in unemployment during the late 1980's and the realisation that job placement depended upon a minimum level of literacy and numeracy that adult literacy became politically acceptable. ACCESS Schemes, developed by the Government to provide training opportunities for unemployed people, included basic reading, writing and numeracy skills in their nationwide curricula. ARLA was officially consulted by the Department of Education during its planning for a survey on the literacy levels of ACCESS students[2].

However, from 1976 to 1984 community volunteers and programme organisers struggled to gain government recognition of their work. They also had a struggle to convince existing educational institutions that the unorthodox methods they used, which challenged the traditional methods for teaching reading and writing, were effective.

Kathy Hill, an ARLA Federation committee member with appropriate tertiary qualifications and experience, was asked to address the task of researching and recording a history of the movement[3]. To undertake this task funding was sought from the Department of Education (now the Ministry of Education), the Social Sciences Research Fund Committee (SSRFC) and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER). Of these three potential sources of funding NZCER was the only one prepared to assist. Although unable to support the historical research, the Council offered Kathy Hill a small grant to enable her to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the schemes and the numbers of students in adult literacy programmes in New Zealand between 1974 and 1988[4].

Work began on the historical research in 1986, with the collection of statistical data being an intergral part of this. Wide consultation was needed to ensure that all developments were recorded. Further, a questionnaire was sent to all adult literacy programmes (via the programme coordinators) currently operating as well as to coordinators of programmes which had been in existence at one time or another[5]. This questionnaire was designed to elicit both historical data and statistical information. In June 1988 a further questionnaire on the use of computers in adult literacy programmes was circulated to all programmes[6].

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1. It appears that this decision was not minuted although it was widely accepted as having been so (Source K. Hill in a letter to G.Wagner dated 2 July, 1990).

2. Irwin, Angela, "The Literacy Needs of ACCESS Students", Department of Education, March 1988.

3. ARLA committee decision, 1986. See footnote 1.

4. Ian Livingstone's letter of 29 September, 1987 to K. Hill.

5. See Appendix 2.

6. See Appendix 3.

Two documents were prepared from the data collected: 1. An interpretive account of the literacy movement in this country entitled "From This Fragile Web: An Informal History of the Adult Literacy Movement in New Zealand 1974-1988" for publication through the ARLA Federation, and 2. An analytic account of the literacy movement with special attention to the nature and effects of literacy programmes from 1974 to 1988. The latter is the basis of this report.

1.2 Previous Research

Very little empirical research has been done into the possible incidence of adult non-literacy in New Zealand. There has been no financial support from the Government for research purposes. In 1975 the Director of the National Council of Adult Education (NCAE), David James, with help of Warwick Elley from the NZCER, calculated an estimate of numbers of adult non-readers in New Zealand. This estimate remains to this day the only formal attempt to quantify the extent of the adult non-reading problem.

To arrive at an estimation of adult non-readers the NZCER Progressive Achievement Tests (Reading Vocabulary) of all fourteen year olds in New Zealand were used as the data base. By making allowances for the numbers of children in Special Classes and those who were in Intellectually Handicapped (IH) institutions, James/Elley estimated that between 50,000 to 100,000 adult New Zealanders would have reading ages of less than 9.5 years. The James/Elley figure has often been misquoted. People do not appear to cite the full range stated, but emphasize only the 100,000 figure.[7]

While further research into the possible numbers of adult non-readers in New Zealand has been sought, nothing has ever been undertaken because of the practical difficulties inherent in designing a research programme to give precise and accurate results in such a sensitive area of human behaviour[8]. Conventional research methods for gathering such information are deemed quite inappropriate for gaining information of this kind. A Government working party was set up in 1976 to examine the possibility of a nationwide survey. It recommended that such a survey be set up, but recognised the practical difficulties in setting up such a research programme. No further action was taken by the Government. Yet, the opportunity arose during the life of the National Council of Adult Education (NCAE) to at least broadly quantify the extent of the adult non-reading problem.

During 1978-1981 the National Council of Adult Education employed an Adult Reading Advisory Officer[9] who recorded the numbers of adult literacy programmes and collected and analysed national figures concerning the numbers of students and tutors working in the programmes[10]. After this position lapsed in 1981, in spite of evidence already extant in the workplace of a vocational need for such support[11], there was no systematic attempt at collecting national figures until 1982 and again in 1984, when the ARLA Federation asked programmes to submit data[12]. ARLA needed the figures because they knew these were important to backup requests for funding, and to prove that programmes were addressing a real

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7. For example in the Christchurch Press, dated November 12, 1984, p.9, under the heading "Big Govt boost for adult literacy" the President of the Adult Learning Assistance Federation is quoted as saying that "At least 100,000 New Zealanders are believed to have difficulty in reading and writing. 'That is a fairly conservative estimate', she said".

8. "Report of the Literacy Project Working Party" 1976, p.15.

9. Her name was Rosalie Somerville.

10. Note, that the data has been supplied from my own records. While these records are complete in themselves they are not the original documents which appear to have gone astray during the wind down of the NCAE during the period 1982-88.

11. See for example the survey by Gail Cunningham et al. , "A Job-Related Literacy Survey Among Electric Power Board Workers", NZCER, November 1983 which was initiated by the Electrical Workers Union and the WEA because the literacy skills of linemen and jointers were inadequate and unable to deal with the introduction of written examinations.

12. See Survey Figures, ARLA Federation, 1982 and 1984, in Appendix I.

need. They also wanted to keep the statistical base as accurate as possible even in the absence of a national coordinator.

In 1987, at ARLA's request, the Honourable Geoffrey Palmer, then Minister of Justice, authorised a survey of the literacy levels of prison inmates. Nineteen penal institutions were surveyed, with three being unable to contribute data. In his official response, Mr A.F.Barnett of the Department of Justice, pointed out that the standardised reading tests are given to inmates serving sentences of 6 months or more[13]. In addition, he was able to give the following information on specific reading levels as shown in Table 1.0.

TABLE: 1.0 Remedial Education - Testing of Sentenced Inmates For Reading, Writing and Communication Abilities (1986)[14]

Institution	Non-Functional (7 yr RA)	Semi Functional (7 to 10 yr RA)	Others to Form 2 Level	Above Form 2 Level	Total Number of Inmates Tested
Arohata Women	6	12		15	33
Auckland Maximum	4	19	3	26	
Auckland Medium	2	4	8	8	22
Christchurch	2	10	6	2	20
Christchurch Women's	5		5		
Dunedin	2	13	19	24	58
Invercargill	4	15	46	51	116
Manawatu	21	52	19	69	8
Mt. Eden	2	9	5		
Napier					*
New Plymouth	10	15	22	12	59
Ohura					**
Rangipo	7	27	53		87
Rolleston	3	7	6		16
Tongariro	4	62	68	8	142
Waikeria	14	131	63	8	216
Wanganui	6	12	20	3	41
Wellington					***
Wi Tako	2	6	8	12	28

Notes:

* As this institution holds only remandees and short term inmates standardized testing is not carried out on a regular basis. A number of inmates have however been helped in improving reading, writing and number skills over the year.

** Standardized testing is not carried out on a regular basis as inmates held at Ohura are generally well-educated. If at any time, it becomes apparent that an inmate is in need of remedial help, this is provided.

*** Statistics have not been kept for 1986 because of successive relief teachers over the year.

Of the 983 inmates surveyed, 85 had non-functional reading skills (i.e. no more than a 7 year reading age level). A further 384 were found to have reading ages of between 7 and 10. This represented 47.8% of the surveyed prison inmates[15].

13. Mr Barnett indicated that the test the Education Officers used to assess individual reading, writing and communication abilities were: 1. Abstract Reasoning using Raven's Progressive Matrices; 2. PAT - Progressive Achievement Test, Level B Comprehension (Education Department); and 3. Gapadol Reading Comprehension Test.

14. Attached to a letter dated 23 September, 1987 from A.F. Barnett of the Department of Justice to Kathy Hill (Reference: 3746K, PADM 6-2-1).

15. Ministry of Justice, Survey Figures September 1987.

The Education Department commissioned research in 1987 which looked at the literacy needs of ACCESS trainees[16]. The researcher, Angela Irwin, surveyed 1680 ACCESS trainees (the majority of whom were under twentyfour years old) in Northland, Southland and Wellington. Her results showed that 51.5% of ACCESS trainees experienced difficulty with reading, 70.05% did not write as well as they would have liked and 69.8% had trouble with Mathematics. The survey also showed that 64.2% would have liked help, or more help if it was available. When these figures are extrapolated to the national total of ACCESS trainees in November 1987 (14,033) they represent 9,009 trainees. Clearly there is a significant adult literacy problem in this section of New Zealand society[17]. It would appear then, that further research into the incidence of literacy difficulties in the total adult population is long overdue. From what has gone before, the present study on the development of adult literacy in New Zealand is the first fully documented account of tuition for non-reading adults for, and on behalf of, the ARLA Federation. In the past, Coordinators of programmes were often volunteers, or were paid a salary which covered only a few hours per week. They were expected to undertake public relations, advertise for students and tutors, train tutors, assess students, ensure that students received appropriate tuition and cope with administration of programmes. Under these conditions very few had the time to record the development of their programmes and only a minority understood the importance of keeping accurate records. Other research on adult literacy work in New Zealand, for example Walton (1982) and Benseman (1989), has concentrated on figures relating to individual programmes. There has been no attempt to gather all the available figures from all adult literacy programmes in the country. In effect, there has been no previous attempt to answer the question: "How many students have been helped by adult literacy programmes in New Zealand since 1974?"[18]

1.3 Definitions

Adult Literacy, for the purposes of this research, is taken to mean the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential[19]. This functional approach at a definition is now generally accepted in adult literacy work, where testing of reading levels by tests designed for use with children is inappropriate.

Adult literacy programmes as used in this report offer free, confidential, one-to-one or small group tuition to non-reading adults. Programmes are community-based and rely on voluntary tutors.

"Programme" is used with reference to adult literacy programmes even though many programmes are named "schemes". This is to maintain consistency and avoid confusion with Government schemes or funding schemes.

The use of the words "illiteracy" and "illiterate" is avoided because of the connotations of lack of intelligence or ability that such words carry. Adult literacy programmes prefer to use neutral words such as "non-reading adults".

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16. ACCESS schemes are pre-employment training programmes funded by the Education and Labour Departments.

17. See Angela Irwin, "The Literacy Needs of ACCESS Students", Department of Education, March 1988.

18. Not all adult literacy programmes belong to ARLA, but programmes which are not Federation members have also contributed data.

19. This is very similar to the UNESCO definition of functional literacy. See Terminology of Adult Learning ibedata: UNESCO (1979).

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study were to:

1. give an account of the growth of the adult literacy movement in New Zealand between 1974 and 1988.

2. gather, analyse and report on the number of students in adult literacy programmes between 1974 and 1987.

3. examine the nature of adult literacy programmes.

4. describe the development of funding arrangements for local coordinators.

5. explore the role of national coordination.

6. undertake an investigation into bi-cultural and multi-cultural emphasis in adult literacy.

7. investigate the extent to which computer technology is influencing adult literacy work.

8. attempt an overview of the benefits of adult literacy programmes during 1974 to 1988.

9. make recommendations where appropriate.

1.5 Structure of the Report

The methodology and results section of this report are divided into five parts: Part I discusses the Development of Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Programmes; Part II covers Bi-cultural and Multi-cultural Activities Within Adult Literacy Programmes; Part III examines the Use of Computers in Adult Literacy Programmes; Part IV is an Evaluation of the Programmes and Part V ends the study with Recommendations arising out of the report.

PART II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT READING AND LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Gathering the information

An informal questionnaire designed by the author was sent to all coordinators of existing adult literacy programmes in New Zealand. Coordinators were asked to send back to the researcher any available information on both historical and statistical aspects of their programmes. No attempt to impose a structure on their responses was made as the researcher was aware that coordinators did not follow a common pattern of recording information or figures. Even so, it was hoped that the maximum possible information would be supplied[20].

All coordinators of programmes which were no longer operating, were also asked to supply all possible information. Data compiled by the NCAE and ARLA were obtained from the National Archives and the Secretary of the ARLA Federation[21]. Further information was taken from the minutes of the adult literacy programmes' annual meetings, other associated records and newspaper clippings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.2 The growth of the Adult literacy network in New Zealand, 1974 - 1988

Voluntary adult literacy programmes have been operating throughout New Zealand since 1974 when the Hawkes Bay New Readers Group was established. Leading up to the establishment of the programme, non-reading adults approached the local secondary school Remedial Reading teacher, Rosalie Somerville, for help. She called on her teaching friends to act as tutors. They discussed the methods they were using, wondered whether they were doing the "right" thing and whether there were others doing the same work from whom they could learn. An approach was then made to the National Council of Adult Education (NCAE)[22].

With the assistance of David James, the Director of NCAE, and the Massey University Extension Department, the Hawkes Bay tutors organised a course for tutors of Adult Non-readers in 1974. This course confirmed their belief in the importance of one-to-one, student-orientated teaching and reassured them that their intuitive approaches were soundly-based[23]. Thus the model for further adult literacy programmes in New Zealand was confirmed and validated.

Initially, the growth of the adult literacy movement was relatively slow. Groups formed in Nelson, Wairarapa, New Plymouth and Auckland during 1975 and 1976. From its first contacts with the Adult New Readers Group in Hawkes Bay, the NCAE did all within its power to encourage the growth of the movement (See Appendix II for a more detailed ac-

20. See Appendix 2.

21. See Appendix 1.

22. Somerville, R. Letter to D. James 1973.

23. The course was entitled "Helping Adult Non-Readers - a training course for prospective tutors", and held at Massey University June-July 1974.

count of how the NCAE became involved in the movement). It subsidised training courses, provided grants-in-aid for programmes and researched means of funding a national coordinator. The NCAE believed that a field of educational need had been successfully identified and wished to work with the programmes to find a viable solution.

In 1978 the NCAE received a grant from the McKenzie Education Foundation to employ a national coordinator for three years[24]. It was hoped that this would be long enough to prove to the Government that reading assistance programmes had identified an educational need and had found a means to serve it. The number of adult literacy programmes grew from sixteen to eighty two during Rosalie Somerville's term as the Adult Reading Advisory Officer of the NCAE (January 1978 - March 1981). An estimate of the clientele made at the time suggested that provision would be needed for 3000 students[25]. When the McKenzie grant expired the Government was not prepared to increase the NCAE's own government grant to fund the position, despite the demonstrated need for the service. At this time, the NCAE's own grant was cut drastically as a part of the Government's cost-cutting programme which affected the whole Education sector.

Nevertheless, the number of programmes continued to grow after the NCAE was no longer able to support the movement, reaching a peak of 127 in any one year. Records show that 143 programmes have existed in New Zealand[26]. Many of these are currently in recess or have been absorbed into larger programmes for ease of administration.

In October 1988 there appeared to be 93 programmes in operation. It is difficult to be precise about numbers as there is no real definition of a programme. One tutor and one student may constitute a programme, as may 200 students and 200 tutors. There have even been programmes listed where tutors have been trained ready to help adult non-readers, but never used because no adults from their district have sought help. Usually the most successful programmes have developed where the need has been identified before the programme has been established. Where the programme was established before the need was identified, success has been limited.

The Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation (ARLA) was formed in 1982 to "link and support" literacy programmes and give the movement a national voice once the NCAE's effectiveness as a support agency had been reduced[27]. Voluntary committee members took over the tasks that had been performed by the professional staff of the NCAE. The period 1981 to 1985, before a Government grant made the appointment of two field officers possible, was a stagnant period for the movement. Numbers of programmes went into recess and very few new programmes began. Without co-ordination and direction from a national advisor, the movement lost much of its impetus.

During 1985 and 1986 the field officers were largely concerned with repairing that damage. The government changed in 1984. Russell Marshall replaced Merv Wellington as Minister of Education. Adult literacy had not been a priority for Merv Wellington, but it was for Russell Marshall. Field Officer positions were filled by Jean James and Liz Hutchinson. They travelled constantly, working with coordinators, training tutors, advising the committee, liaising with overseas literacy programmes and re-vitalising literacy programmes. Their work laid the foundations for the growth which is currently re-occurring.

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24. The appointment was made for three years on the Technical Institute Tutor 1 salary scale.

25. NCAE "Adult Reading Assistance Schemes" June 1979. There is no indication of authorship on the NCAE document. It was prepared as part of a submission to the Minister of Education, so was probably a joint effort by NCAE staff.

26. The records mentioned here are NCAE files, ARLA files, files of individual programmes, letters and newspaper clippings.

27. ARLA Constitution, 1982.

2.3 The numbers of adult literacy students in programmes between 1974/87

While Rosalie Somerville held the position of Adult Reading Advisory Officer for the NCAE, it was possible to arrive at relatively accurate figures for the size and scope of the national movement. She knew that numbers carried weight and guided coordinators through the maze of keeping appropriate statistical data. In three successive years she sent out survey questionnaires which enabled her to calculate the numbers of students being assisted[28]. During 1979, 1406 students joined programmes, making a total of 2078 students since work began in 1974. By 1981, the number had grown to 5016[29].

While Somerville was coordinating and guiding the movement, programmes kept figures in a relatively standardised way. This was because she was continually pointing out the importance of statistics and the need for coordinators to make the effort to keep data up-to-date. During the years when national co-ordination was impossible, these good work patterns disappeared.

ARLA undertook a nationwide survey in 1982, which showed that over 5000 students had been assisted in 102 programmes since 1974. This was followed by another survey in 1984 which showed that 9000 had been helped overall, with approximately 2000 currently working. Both surveys confirmed the principal pattern that had shown up during Somerville's time: most of the students were young adolescent or adult males. In 1982, for example, two thirds of the students were male, while 50% of the students were in the fifteen to nineteen year old age range.

These surveys have been used to show the growth of the movement, but they are not very helpful in determining the nature of the movement. Until programme coordinators have the time, and understand the need for carefully maintained and standardised statistics, only a patchy picture will emerge.

A survey of all the available statistics of the movement up till 1986/7 has currently been completed. It is now possible to list the total number of students assisted, but absolutely impossible to state categorically that this figure is accurate, or use the related figures to form any picture of the movement. Coordinators are so over-worked, and so far removed from working to a national pattern that the statistics available vary greatly in their preciseness. Some programmes keep full and accurate statistics, which give a clear picture of their programmes. Others have merely provided average figures for a ten year period or even stated that they have never kept records.

Now that ARLA has more staffing, it is imperative that national guidelines for keeping statistics are established, and that programme coordinators be encouraged to keep a regular record. Coordinators must be encouraged to regard this as an important part of their work - not just an unwelcome extra.

Within these limitations, the following are the nearest estimate of total student and tutor numbers for the adult literacy movement from 1974 through to 1986/7:

Table: 2.0. New Zealand Totals of Students and Tutors - 1974/87

Students	Tutors
12,117	8,108

28. These figures no longer exist in the national records. Summary data is all that is available for the researcher.

29. Refer to Rosalie Somervilles's annual surveys 1979-1981.

2.4 *Three Case Studies*

There are some regions that keep exemplary records and provide the investigator with information on the nature and functions of programmes. The Dunedin group of programmes is a good example.

Dunedin: The Dunedin area is serviced by the following programmes: Dunedin South, Dunedin Central, Dunedin North, Dunedin Prison, Anderson's Bay/Peninsula, Mosgiel, and East Otago. These programmes are affiliated to The Otago Literacy Project, which acts as a co-ordinating committee for them. Statistics for individual programmes are compiled and filed with the Project's statistics officer, who keeps individual and overall records. Records are kept of the cumulative total of students, the number of current students, the number of new students entering the programme for the first time and the numbers withdrawing. No attempt is made to isolate age ranges, sex, ESL students, or Maori students. The same pattern is repeated for all tutors.[30]

Table: 2.1 Totals for Combined Dunedin Programmes - 1978/86 Students

Year	Grand Total	Current Students
1978	230	
1979	300	230
1980	400	
1981	448	320
1982	741	186
1983	933	376
1984	1241	188
1985	1412	128
1986	1540	150

Table 2.2 Overall Totals for Combined Dunedin Programmes - 1978/86 Tutors

Year	Grand Total	Current Students
1978	200	
1979		200
1980	300	
1981		250
1982	493	203
1983	560	270
1984	645	183
1985	778	152
1986	796	190

An analysis of a small group within the Dunedin Project shows that, between March 1983 and July 1983, 35 students were matched with tutors. Sixteen were still working with tutors in July 1983, but 19 had finished studying with a tutor[31].

This large number [of dropouts] concerned the coordinator, who analysed the reasons given for stopping work. Of the 19, only five of the students had achieved their goals.

30. Gilmore, R. "Statistics for Dunedin Schemes - 1978-1986".

31. Taylor, D., "Literacy Report July 1983".

Six gave up without achieving their aims, but eight had just disappeared completely, without contacting their tutor or coordinator. Whether they had achieved their aims or not was pure speculation.

From this small section of the movement, the Dunedin coordinator was able to pinpoint an area of concern in her own programme at that time, and take some steps to ensure that the high dropout rate was only temporary.

Timaru: The Timaru programme, which can be regarded as a typical medium-sized programme with some paid coordinator hours, provided the following summary information about its tutors and students[32]. A more detailed breakdown is contained in Appendix IV: It is typical of adult literacy programmes in New Zealand that the majority of students are male.

Table: 2.3 Characteristics of Timaru Tutors - March 1988

Sex		Age		Work Status	
Male	21	18-30yrs	20	Full-time	41
Females	87	30-55yrs	66	Not in paid	
Total Tutors	108	55yrs +	22	work	77

32. Newman, S, "South Canterbury Adult Literacy Programme figures - March 1988".

Table: 2.4 Characteristics of Timaru Students - March 1988

Sex		Age	
		Under 30	75
Males	77	30-40yrs	29[33]
Females	32	40-50yrs	2[34]
		50-60yrs	2
Total	109	Total	109

General	Reasons for Leaving
9 sought training specifically for a driver's licence	56 left town
8 moved on to correspondence work with tutors	31 decided that they were not ready for further literacy work
8 were working on trade examinations	94 achieved their goal
2 were working on polytechnic study	17 left because of other pressures
1 was studying through Massey University	
14 were students from ACCESS schemes	
4 were mildly handicapped students seeking survival literacy skills	

Christchurch figures for February to July 1986, for example, show that of the 43 new students entering the programme over that period 27 were male and 16 were female[35].

Southland: The Southland programme has not kept its figures in isolation as has the Dunedin programme, but the coordinator has reported regularly to Annual General Meetings and the the following figures have been gleaned from the minutes of such meetings:

33. Most in this age group tend to be men, who are well-motivated and needing literacy skills for promotion at work or to enable them to become self-employed.

34. Literacy beginners.

35. Hill, C., "Six month Review of Students, February 1986 to July 1986", September 1986.

Table: 2.5 Number of Southland Tutors During Period 1978/87

Year	Tutors Available
1978	24
1980	80
1981	81
1983/84	143
1984/85	170
1987	145

The coordinator chose to examine the tutor figures in three annual reports:

1984/85
3 tutor courses held
60 new tutors
6 moved or withdrawn
110 remain from other years
35 are waiting for students (mostly in the country)
32 do not want a student at the moment

Figures include Invercargill, Winton and Bluff, but not Gore.

1985/86
Term 2: 16 new tutors
2 teaching English as a Second Language
1 working with a stroke patient
13 adult literacy tutors, 1 working with a probationer
and 3 working with prisoners.

1987
46 tutors at 3 training courses
94 live in Invercargill
39 live in rural and outlying areas
12 not wanting a student at the moment

Table: 2.6 Students in Southland Programmes 1978/87

Year	New Students	Total Students
1978	20	
1979		
1980		65
1980/81		70-80
1981/82	60	80
1982/83	73	105
1983/84	50	
1984/85	82	96
1985/86	76	100
1986/87	55	95
		Plus 423 TAPS[36]

36. TAPS stands for Training Assistance Programme.

The following details of student intakes have been recorded:

Table: 2.7 Age Range of Southland Students 1978/84

Year	Age Range	Comments
1978	16-73	Most below 20-40
1980	15-74	
1982	20 or below	Majority
1983/84	Teens	39
	20-29	18
	30+	7

There has been no attempt to record whether students achieved their goals before leaving the programme or to determine why the programme remained at a relatively stable size despite regular large intakes of new students.

Some figures recording student movements have been maintained.

1981/82
35 new students during the year
20 remain in programme
6 are going it alone or receiving help from home
3 "faded" away
3 moved away
3 changed circumstances

1984
82 new students
9 returning for second or third time
9 referred to other programmes, correspondence school, STEPS[37]
19 removed or withdrawn
48 remaining

1985/6
76 new students
5 are returning for the second time
1/3 have pulled out

Thoughts on Dropout From Programmes

An uncomfortable fact shown up by these, and other, figures is that many students leave without attaining their goals. Of the 43 new students recorded by Christchurch in the first half of 1986, for example, 10 had left without achieving their goal by July of that year. In the same time frame though, 6 students did achieve their goals[38].

In the heady early days of the programmes, coordinators were quoted as saying their drop-out rates were low. People tend to think this is still the case, but if coordinators kept close track of these figures they might find it is not the case. This is an important area of research for ARLA to undertake. Is the drop-out rate increasing? If it is, what is causing it, and what can be done to reverse the trend again? Is it a symptom of coordina-

37. STEPS means Sequential Tests of Educational Progress.

38. Ibid.

tors being so over-worked that they are unable to monitor pairings adequately, or is it an indication that one-to-one tuition does not work as well as people had hoped it would? Is it because literacy is only just one of many problems facing students?

Coordinators must be encouraged to use statistical data to gain a clear, objective picture of their programmes' performances and work out potential problem areas.

2.5 The Nature of Adult Literacy Programmes

Adult literacy programmes are a community enterprise, providing a community solution to a community problem.

There is great diversity in the organisation of programmes, but there are also many common features. Using voluntary tutors, they all seek to provide appropriate, free tuition that will enable students to cope better with the demands of living in a literate society.

Coordinators, without exception, work many more hours than they receive payment for. The majority of coordinators are volunteers, chosen from the ranks of tutors. In the early days of programmes the coordinators tended to emerge from the first group of tutors trained in an area. Recently, with the gradual increase in paid positions provided by the Department of Education some coordinators have been appointed by formal tertiary training institutions - particularly polytechnics.

There are no pre-requisites for enrolling in an adult literacy tutor training course. The only qualification needed is the ability to read and write. Sometimes the stress on the lack of qualifications has been taken to mean that teachers are actively discouraged from working as tutors. This is not the case. Many tutors have high teaching qualifications, but many also have never progressed through the formal education system past their early High School years. Some of the most effective tutors have been past students, who have made sufficient progress to undertake a training course and work with students of their own.

Training courses are brief (usually fifteen to twenty hours), but intense, concentrating in the main on participation. Tutors are helped to understand how adults learn through role plays and shared learning experiences. They are also helped to empathise with non-reading adults. Coordinators sometimes suggest that potential tutors are unsuitable, but generally tutors are encouraged to "self-select". As courses progress tutors are challenged to examine their own attitudes and decide whether they are able to work with a student on a one-to-one basis.

Early tutor trainers were very aware of the social importance of the work they were doing. They tried to impart an awareness of the changes that learning to read could bring about in students' lives. This aspect of training may have been lost in some programmes as coordinators struggled to survive during the years when there was no national co-ordination.

Individual programmes may offer certificates for tutors who have completed their own training courses, but there is currently no national certificate. Some adult literacy workers believe that the increasing recognition of their work necessitates increasing standardisation of training. The need to provide the best possible service to students is reflected in the desire to provide quality training for all tutors.

Programmes are student-orientated. Students are offered free tuition that is specifically geared to their aims and needs. In smaller towns and smaller programmes this help tends to be one-to-one and absolutely confidential. In the larger centres, where anonymity is possible, there is less emphasis on confidentiality and students often work in small groups. Typical student learning needs are Drivers Licences, Firearms Licences, First Aid courses, English as a Second Language (ESL), spelling, mathematics, and correspondence work for the New Zealand Trades Certification Board examinations.

In many programmes it has been possible to set up Student Groups. Often these are organised by the students themselves. Social activities vary from sports challenges between

student groups, play readings and writing weekends, to fund raising for trips to adult literacy conferences. The Timaru student group has attended all adult literacy conferences in New Zealand and one in Australia.

An important feature of adult literacy programmes is the care with which students and tutors are matched. Through tutor training courses, the coordinators learn much about their tutors. Tutors also provide information about their background and interests. Students are assessed carefully, using non-formal assessment methods[39]. Once coordinators have assessed the reading ability of the students, it is important to discover what they wish to learn and what their interests are. Coordinators then use the information to make a careful matching that will enable the students to achieve their goals. Students and tutors have freedom to decide where and when they meet - although tutors are encouraged to arrange regular sessions. Experience has shown that adults know how they learn best. Students have a great say in what material is learnt and what methods are used. It is pointless for the tutor to persist using a learning method which the student feels uncomfortable with, or has already experienced repeated failure with at school. When the tutor listens to the student and produces work that the student can see leads directly towards his reading goals, then success is more likely.

Keeping statistical data is a common difficulty for programmes. Students and tutors have the flexibility to take extended breaks from work, stop work completely or start work again without necessarily notifying their coordinator. Coordinators ask that they be kept in touch, but human nature being what it is, not all tutors remember. Students may take several years off learning, but still consider a tutor "theirs" and still consider themselves members of the reading programme. For these reasons many programmes feel unable to be precise about student numbers on any given date. ARLA field staff are encouraging tutors to be more accountable in their volunteer work. Choice and flexibility are important, but a change in documenting this aspect of the work is needed.

2.6 Payment for Local Coordinators

The first programmes to develop were able to achieve funding for their coordinators very rapidly. The Auckland programme began with a paid position. Both Hawkes Bay and Nelson were able to convince their local polytechnics that a part-time salary was essential. Later programmes were not so fortunate. It became increasingly difficult for programmes to achieve part-time salaries for their coordinators as economic cuts were experienced across the whole economy.

While programmes remained relatively small, voluntary coordinators could keep them running effectively. They quickly grew too big for voluntary effort to sustain and extend them. Increasing concerns about the heavy workloads of volunteer coordinators resulted in a policy document being prepared by the NCAE, after consultation with programmes[40]. British experience suggested that thirty five students was the maximum number of students that one coordinator could manage in a full time salaried position. New Zealand literacy workers decided that fifty students was a more realistic number. This became the basis of applications to Government for funding for coordinators through the polytechnic system. From 1977, the NCAE began requesting coordinator positions at a growth rate of ten per year, but achieved very little success. The ideal of one full-time position for each thirty five to fifty student pairs has never been achieved.

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39. ARLA coordinators follow a similar pattern of non-formal assessment. Students are asked about their "survival skills" can they write their own name, their spouse's name and their children's names, can they cope with writing cheques and filling out banking slips? If these skills are well-established, coordinators use Informal Reading Inventories, running records, open-ended questions, and oral reading to ascertain reading ability. All material used is adult-based, not child-based. Students' own writing is also used as a form of assessment.

40. NCAE "Adult Reading Assistance Schemes", June 1979.

Progress in achieving salaries for coordinators has been slow and does not adequately reflect the importance or the significance of the work being undertaken. Early in the 1970's the Education Department and the Polytechnics seemed prepared to back the new, experimental programmes. Once programmes began to proliferate they seemed less keen. While there were only a few programmes it was possible to finance them without threatening other established courses. The Department's attitude to adult literacy changed too, as the Minister of Education, Merv Wellington, excluded adult literacy from its list of priorities even though the adult literacy movement was challenging its complacency about the "so called" high literacy rate in New Zealand.

In 1978 there were forty adult literacy programmes in New Zealand[41]. Of these, six - Auckland WEA, Auckland South, Hawkes Bay, Otago, Nelson and Christchurch WEA - received salaries from the Department of Education through the polytechnic system. Only Auckland received a full-time salary, the rest were part-time. Over the whole country there was the equivalent of 3.5 full-time positions - and this when the total student number, in April 1979, was 2078.

During the 1980's growth in paid support for the programmes was slow. By 1982, 5.2 full-time equivalent positions had been granted to thirteen programmes, leaving over 100 programmes without paid coordinator positions. In July 1986, 10.58 full-time equivalent positions had been granted to 19 of the 120 programmes that were currently operating. By 1988, twenty two programmes had part-time paid coordinator positions[42].

It appeared that more programmes were now receiving assistance but the assistance was inequitable. The NCAE's guidelines for the appointment of salaried coordinators were not being followed by the Department of Education. Student numbers did not correlate with the size of the position granted. Programmes of comparable size were offered differing hours per week and differing salary rates. One good thing that resulted out of this situation was that some polytechnics did feel able to offer the coordinators high salary rates to compensate for the many hours of unpaid work needed to run a vibrant, growing programme.

Polytechnic directors held widely ranging views on the need for adult literacy work. Some were very supportive, while others claimed that adult literacy was not a problem in their district. Some polytechnics paid coordinators at high salary rates, while others quibbled over responsibilities and resented the independence of the programmes (an integral part of adult literacy work) from Polytechnic Council control.

A close examination of Table 2.8 (below) shows that there is very little standardisation between the size of the programmes and the size of the position granted. The sizes of the positions clearly do not recognise the NCAE recommendation that there be one full-time position for each thirty five to fifty student/tutor pairs. If this were so Ashburton would have two full-time positions, not merely a 0.15 position, and Christchurch would be staffed for this kind of work by 3.5 full-time staff.

This situation needs to be addressed seriously by the government. Coordinators have worked very hard to ensure that high quality tuition is available to all. It is now up to the government to ensure that the quality is maintained and the service extended by providing equitable salaries for those running programmes. The polytechnics will not be able to provide adequate salaried positions until there is a change of government policy in this area and the funds are made available to them. Coordinators are ensuring that literacy programmes are being maintained, but while they are over-worked, they are not able to actively promote the work they do, or give more than adequate support for their students.

The government has accepted that there is a literacy problem in New Zealand. It now needs to encourage literacy programmes to make themselves available to all non-readers in

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41. Somerville, R. "Report October 23 - November 20, 1978" - 9 November 1978.

42. Department of Education, "1988 Polytechnic Staffing".

New Zealand. It needs to ensure that coordinators receive payment in proportion to the numbers of students working in their programmes. Each thirty five to fifty students creates sufficient work to warrant a full-time paid coordinator.

It is important to note that both the Gisborne and Porirua positions were granted for English as a Second Language (ESL) co-ordination, not adult literacy. Adult literacy work in the community was perceived as politically unacceptable and until the Labour Government came into power in July 1984 received much less assistance than ESL work. Since 1984 the Government has significantly increased its assistance to the adult literacy movement - particularly in 1988. The unemployment crisis has emphasised the need to find solutions to the large numbers of non-literate adult members of our society. Reading is often an essential work skill. It seems that adult literacy work is at long last politically acceptable, because it is a political reality.

Table: 2.8 Salaried Coordinator Positions as at 18 July 1986

Programme	Position 1986	1986 Student Numbers	Year Granted	Number of students when first granted.	Position first granted
Hawkes Bay	0.65	100	1976	116	0.5
South Auckland	0.5	200	1976		0.5
Nelson	0.65	111	1976	23	0.5
Auckland	1.25	200	1978	65	1.0
Hamilton	0.65	150	1978	30	0.5
Dunedin	0.71	150	1978	78	0.5
Christchurch	0.75	175	1979	86	0.5
Timaru	0.35	62	1980	52	0.15
Rotorua	0.5	42	1980		0.5
Invercargill	0.65	95	1981	80	0.5
Palmerston North	0.32	53	1982		0.32
Masterton	0.3	60	1982	75	0.3
Tauranga	0.4	71	1982	77	0.2
Whangarei	0.35	175	1983		0.35
Taranaki	0.35	56	1983	35	0.35
Porirua	0.75	74	1983	48	0.75
Gisborne	0.3	41	1984	40	0.3
Wanganui	0.4	31	1984		0.4
Auckland	0.25		1985		0.25
Horowhenua	0.1	52	1985	50	0.1
West Auckland WEA	0.25	30+	1985	30	0.25
Ashburton	0.15	85	1986	85	0.15
Average	0.58				

2.7 National Coordination

Rosalie Somerville held the position of Adult Reading Assistance Officer (ARAO) of the NCAE from January 1979 till March 1981. In this position she was able to bring cohesion and an element of standardisation to the adult literacy movement.

The ARAO was responsible for running many initial training courses, and her ideas and methods were then passed on by those she had trained. Somerville also led national training courses, trusting that programme coordinators would formulate a clear common philosophy and strong communication links.

As ARAO, Somerville was aware of the importance of national communications and always consulted closely with programmes. Part of this consultation process resulted in the Five Year Plan for Adult Literacy which the NCAE prepared in 1979 and which still forms the basis of adult literacy requests to Government.

Once the NCAE's ARAO position was no longer funded, it was impossible for the adult literacy movement to be carefully fostered or closely monitored. The NCAE, immersed in its own problems with funding cuts, guided the formation of the Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation to ensure there was a possibility of national cohesion and planning[43]. A voluntary committee, with very little experience of the national work of the movement, was formed and assumed the role that had been undertaken by the NCAE.

Somerville had argued consistently that two people were needed to do the tasks she had performed and promote the growth of the movement. From 1981 till 1985, there was nobody at all to do the work. The movement became fragmented and despaired of ever achieving its goals nationally, but local coordinators and tutors continued their work with individual students. All believed that sooner or later their cause must be recognised.

The ARLA Federation had two years of despair between 1982 and 1984. With the National Government in power, and Mr Wellington as Minister of Education there was no chance of funding for a national coordinator. Wherever the Federation turned there were closed doors. With the Labour Government in 1984, things changed quickly. By 1985, the Federation was able to appoint two field staff - Jean James and Liz Hutchinson - both experienced adult literacy workers, from funds provided by the Government and the Lotteries Board[44]. Government education policy-makers gradually recognised the worth of the movement and by 1988 funding had increased sufficiently to allow appointments to the Federation of an Executive Officer (with clerical assistance), a part-time treasurer, six .5 area coordinators, a .75 National Training Officer, and two part-time positions to develop adult literacy work with Maori people. In some respects this was recognition of the hard work put in by many volunteers over many years.

The infra-structure that ARLA is developing should enable the movement to maintain and extend literacy provision nationwide. It should also offer the opportunity to develop and extend national training programmes for tutors and standardised methods of record keeping.

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43. 1982 Government Budget Funding reductions.

44. Vote: Education provided the salary and expenses for one full-time field officer and the Lotteries Board provided expenses for one full-time field officer. The combined sum enabled ARLA to employ one full-time and one half-time officer.

PART III

BI-CULTURAL AND MULTI-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES WITHIN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMMES

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Information Gathering

Letters were written to coordinators of all programmes known, or believed, to be working with Maori students. Co-ordinators were asked to detail any information available with regard to Maori students. This information was to cover attracting students to programmes, matching students with tutors, methods used to teach students and the numbers of students. Figures regarding ESL students were extracted from the overall figures supplied by co-ordinators for their programmes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.2 Bi-cultural and Multi-cultural work

During 1987 Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, the Member of Parliament for Southern Maori, approached the ARLA Federation for information on the number of Maori people being tutored through adult literacy programmes[45].

Many programmes were asked to provide her with statistics. The response was very good, but programmes were unable to provide Ms Tirikatene-Sullivan with the information she needed for one main reason - most co-ordinators do not keep statistics which distinguish between Maori and Pakeha. However, the co-ordinator of the Palmerston North programme is one exception[46].

Table: 3.0 Ethnic Origins of Adult Literacy Students in Palmerston North -1985/87

Year	Maori	Pakeha	ESL	Pacific Island
1985	14	99	5	1
1986	11	98	5	1
1987	15	92	10	4

There is no indication, however, how many of the students listed in Table 3.1 are "new" students each year.

Other programmes also work with Maori people. The proportions of students are very low and co-ordinators believe there is a much greater need in the community than that which is currenty being served.

ARLA recognises that the need must be assessed and means to service the need developed. The current service offers a white, middle class solution that does not necessarily appeal

45. Tirikatene-Sullivan, W., Letter to K Hill, 20 March 1987.

46. Nixon, A., "Palmerston North Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Scheme (ARLA)", 1988.

to young Maori people. ARLA and local programmes are starting to work with the Maori community to find a way to make literacy tuition freely available to all Maori youth who need it. At the 1988 Bi-ennial General Meeting of ARLA Federation a resolution was passed, calling for a greater bi-cultural approach in all ARLA's work. This resolution is mirrored in the appointment of field staff to work in the bi-cultural area.

Most literacy programmes are proud of the work they have done with English as as a Second Language students. Nationalities range from Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Samoan, Tongan and Japanese through Russian, Chilean, Dutch, Swiss, German, Yugoslav and Greek. At any one time a small town like Ashburton may be teaching students from upwards of five or six different nationalities. High school students on Exchange programmes often come to literacy programmes for tuition.

Table: 3.1 ESL Students Recorded by Programmes - 1978/87[47]

Programme	Year	ESL Students	Total ESL Students
Nelson	1978	7	
Ashburton	1980	7 plus 2 families	
Hawkes Bay	1978/87		90
Christchurch	1982	17	
Dunedin	1982		80
Huntly	1982	1	
Onerahi	1987		8
Taumaranui	1987	1 Maori/2 ESL	14

Porirua has had a paid co-ordinator position for ESL work since 1983. The programme began in 1978 as an adult literacy programme but the demand for ESL work soon outstripped the demand for adult literacy.

Table: 3.2 Porirua Programme Adult Literacy and ESL Numbers - 1978/87

Student Status	Year(s)	Adult Literacy	ESL
Students Working	1985	40	80
Students Working	1987	22	50
Students Waiting	1987	20	30
Total	1978/87	108	207

Until ARLA is able to set up a national standardised system of keeping statistical data, more detailed information about the multi-cultural nature of adult literacy tuition will not be available.

47. These figures are extracted from data provided by programmes. Note however that the difference between number of ESL Students and Total ESL Students relates to whether programmes kept records on a yearly basis or on a cumulative basis.

PART IV

USE OF COMPUTERS IN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMMES

METHODOLOGY

4.1 The Computer Survey Questionnaire

Several literacy programmes have expressed interest in buying computers, and computers have always been a popular feature at literacy conferences. In July 1988 a survey on the use of computers by adult literacy programmes in New Zealand was completed (See Appendix IV).

107 programmes were surveyed. Replies covering 81 programmes were received. 26 programmes did not reply, but five of these are believed to be in recess (This gives a realistic and satisfactory response rate of 79.5%). Of the 21 remaining programmes only three deal with large numbers of students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.2 Computer Technology and Adult Literacy Programmes

Thirteen programmes reported that they use computers, but of these only nine own their equipment. In other words, four programme tutors use their own personal computers.

One programme has owned its computer for four years, but the majority have owned them for one year or less. Two programmes gave no indication of time computers have been owned.

One programme owns six computers, and uses them to run computer-based literacy courses for ACCESS students. One owns two computers, but the rest have only one each.

The computers are used for both teaching and administration purposes. Eight use computers for administration.

General Comments on Teaching: Programmes find computers useful for teaching purposes, but not in isolation. The computer is used as an introductory tool, or a back-up method in most cases. It provides an alternative attractive approach and students can be more motivated and enthusiastic when using a computer than when using paper and pencil. Self-directed learning is possible and it can be useful for spelling if individualised programmes can be made. It is possible for one student to teach another using the computer. The computer is a useful tool in adult literacy work as it is an adjunct to 1:1 teaching, builds confidence and contributes to self-esteem.

Six programmes use word processor and spelling programmes in their teaching. Four use maths programmes. Other software used covers punctuation, language games, reading programmes, a driving licence programme, data base and Printshop. Games such as Mathsmaster, Shoot the Word, Piccadilly Pairs, Troll's Tale, Dragon Spells and Geogra-BEE are also used.

However, co-ordinators also comment that for reading work the computer is inferior to written material. The screen is harder to read than print on paper. Also, books and printed material, including that written by students are better to work from. There are times when the computer is not flexible enough to be useful. It cannot respond to students' immediate needs, and at times things like American spelling are a definite hindrance.

All coordinators supplement the computer with conventional means of teaching. The methods used include reading exercises, games, books, arts, crafts, group work, discussion, repeating the same work on paper as on computer and reinforcing work during 1:1 sessions.

The time spent on computers by students varies from under 1 hour to over six hours per week. This represents from 0.01% to 10% of the total student time spent on learning. These figures can vary from week to week and depend on whether students are ARLA students or ACCESS trainees.

Computers are treated as self-learning tools. Students learn to identify their own mistakes and are given the chance to correct them. Important mistakes are discussed, but no corrections are made to students' work without the students being consulted. Mistakes are dealt with immediately.

Only three out of ten programmes make up their own teaching programmes.

Tutors who use computers find there is a place for them in their teaching programmes but believe they will not supplant "traditional" methods based on reading, writing and paper.

The figures for tutors working with computers are interesting. 31 tutors, nationally, work with computers. Of these 20 are women, with the largest group being aged 40 and over. Only 3 of the tutors had extensive training with computers before starting literacy work with them. The rest have learnt as they have gone along. Only 2 tutors said they subscribed to computer magazines. It seems it is not computer "buffs" who are experimenting with computers in literacy work.

Students using computers are:

Male	61
Female	62

Wellington has 200-150 students a year in 12 week modules. More of these are males than females.

Ages of students using computers:

15-19 yrs	40
20-24 yrs	19
25-29 yrs	16
30-40 yrs	10
40+ yrs	4

Not all programmes were able to provide information on the ages of their students.

Several programmes have indicated that they are interested in purchasing a computer, so a survey in the future should show a growth in numbers.

PART V

AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMMES - 1974/88

5.1 Have the last twelve years been worth all the effort?

The previous sections of this report speak for themselves. However, the only people who can answer the question above are the students. What follows are their comments selected from field notes, reports and letters:

Case 1: Bill is a married man with two teenage children. He is a New Zealand representative sportsman and is in full time employment. He is a member of a large rural programme, which has a very small part-time salaried position.

"I have been a member of the adult reading programme for nine years. I joined to keep up with my five year old daughter when she started school. I just needed to learn to read.

Adult reading has helped me in a lot of ways. It has given me the confidence to read books. They may only be condensed versions, but at least I can now finish a book and know what I've read. I can relate TV programmes to the books I have read.

I can read recipes better, so my cooking has improved. I also have the confidence to deal with written instructions on things I have bought - like tools and paint.

I've passed my Boiler Attendant's certificate with adult reading help. I'm not saying I wouldn't have been able to pass it without help, but I wouldn't have been able to get it so easily.

Now I'm working on my Second Class Certificate. This is a Big Challenge! I've been working on it for two years already. I've still got four assignments to do and the TCI keeps sending me letters telling me I'm late with my assignments and threatening to cross me off the roll. I've always nearly finished an assignment when they write, so I get in touch with them immediately. I'm still on the roll, but it will be a while before I'm ready for the exam. I'm already nervous about going for it.

I don't know whether I'll pass or fail, but at least I'll fail trying. I only just passed the last exam, and this one is a lot harder. So I can't say I'll succeed at the end.

I've had about five tutors since I've been on the programme. My present tutor is great. I've been with him for about two years. He's retired and goes out of his way to help me. He can see my improvement more than I can.

I feel I don't have as much contact with the reading programme as I would like, or as much as I used to get. I still get the newsletter, but I have not had a phone call from anyone "checking up" on me for ages. Neither has my tutor. Is the programme so big that the coordinator hasn't got time? I liked it when I kept in touch with people.

There's definitely still a place for adult reading programmes in the community. It takes a lot courage for a student to ask for help. People think "I have managed up till now, why should I bother to go and get help." I don't know whether I could do it again, but I've definitely done better with my life since I've been getting help.

For a start, my job is better. The qualifications gave me an opening. My job is now worth an extra $100 a week to me, and that gives me a better life. I feel as if I have accomplished something. People give me a tough time and tell me I have a lazy time looking after the boilers, but I'm totally in charge when I'm on the job. I tell people to make the best of their opportunities. It is possible to get better jobs, and get better paid and get a bit more power over your life.

My life is definitely better since I came on the programme. My self-esteem has risen. I feel more confident and don't have to hide anything. Now if I can't spell a word, I ask. I used to avoid it. I try to write as much as possible. I'm still not good at writing letters - my wife has to do a few repair jobs. I write each letter at least twice - it takes me a long time. My spelling is not very good, but I can pick up spelling mistakes in the newspapers and errors in my assignments.

I'm reading a lot harder words than I used to, and still can beat my kids at identifying some words (but they can beat me at spelling!)

I feel I've got a lot more confidence in reading, but there are still a lot of things I'm still wanting to do. I feel that kids coming out of school with a learning disability have got a better chance than I had, because there is now so much help available to them."

Case 2: Another student wrote the following report to be read to a meeting of students and tutors in 1980:

"I have been trying hard to find myself, to find out all my thoughts and feelings. I'm going to write them out in the hope that someone else may be able to relate to them or they might be able to help me when I am trying to write something in the future.

On looking back at myself, when I first arrived for my lesson, I was a person who was busy hiding my faults and incapability, knowing that I had a reading and writing problem but then not knowing it had affected my whole personality. I was so busy covering my deficiency that I lost the real me. I was unable to identify and was always in a situation of being insecure, unsure and lost my sense of judgment. I never related around others, I was unable to be myself when trying to communicate and was always being taken the wrong way. I ended up feeling aggressive and finally depressed.

When I was at school I feel that confidence and understanding were the two things I was never given, I equally never cared and never did my best.

Then when I met my tutor for once somebody was interested in my problem, in me and cared. I wanted to show my appreciation in the best way possible by doing my best because it was something I wanted and only I could fulfil it.

As the understanding and confidence was given to me I felt like I had been given a new lease of life. I had been rebuilt on a solid foundation. I was opening up to face my incapabilities and meeting my challenge with the thought of winning this time around. Everything I read and wrote had to be me or I had to be able to relate to it in one way or another. By doing this my knowledge broadened and a new person started to emerge. A person more sensitive, more aware, more open, more honest with myself and more happy. I felt like someone had lifted a ton of bricks off my head. The scar that was visible for so long had started

to vanish and I was starting to meet my challenge head on. I began to feel confident and capable but never forgetting the frustration of being at the bottom knowing how much it was a part of me.

For communication is our existence on the earth for you use it every day in every way it is so important. It is a way of giving out, letting out your frustrations, showing your emotions and affections. So much is based on communication but with me I was limited with my communication equipment e.g. (my reading, writing, understanding of words and spelling) that to me made everything inside me limited.

But now I feel I can communicate to others no matter who or what they are, on the fact that I am a person with a lot of feeling trying to identify so that I can be understood, can understand things better in our everyday life. It has made me sensitive to other people's feelings and although going ahead I am for ever turning back to look at others who may stumble, wanting to show them the steady course. I want to share my confidence, understanding good fortune so that they too will grow strong and be set free from their insecurities. A truly good and satisfying feeling that cost me nothing."

Case 3: Sam is married to a teacher and has two pre-school sons. He works full time and has been a reading student, in several situations, since the late 1970's. His long term goal is to attend Bible College and perhaps become a missionary. "When I was 20, I was told I had a reading age of seven." Now Sam is 32. He enjoys reading 'The Christchurch Press' right through and continues his 1:1 tuition with an adult literacy programme because he needs to improve his writing skills if he is to succeed at Bible College.

Sam was placed in a slow learner class at high school. His maths and reading were both poor, but he left school at the end of the fourth form because he was offered a job. He was not encouraged to stay at school. He first experienced 1:1 tuition when he was working. His tutor concentrated on 'the basics', working on vowel sounds and phonics. He gained in confidence during this time.

"I had been very quiet. I wouldn't say 'boo'. I stepped over a lot of things and never challenged anything. I never stuck up for myself. When I started reading my confidence grew and I questioned things. I even challenged a boss! That wasn't very appropriate. 'Sam, you've changed,' he said. I was unable to get an apprenticeship because of my lack of education. That made me look at going back to school.

I spent two years at H... High School. I felt at that time, when I became a Christian, that I had a calling to serve God. I was in the Catholic Church and felt I had a vocation to enter the priesthood. Education was important. It was down and I had to get it up. My teacher there was helpful, and encouraging and commented that I had learnt the basics well. I sat four subjects for School Certificate: Economics, History, Geography and English. I got 14% in English. If I'd had a reader/writer I'd have flown through. My biggest problem was reading the material and writing down my thoughts. I knew it, but couldn't express it. I also had help from three girl students who were doing a survey. They helped me. I was reading the 'Midget Series'.

I enjoyed my time at H... High School, even though I was disappointed that I didn't pass, but I think that I achieved in maturity. It was an achievement just going back and was an important time in my life. I spent time with tertiary students and even though it was wrong, I envied them, but I realised that they had the same problems I had in completing their work and gaining good marks.

After I finished at H... High School, I carried on with my reading. I still have a long way to go, but it doesn't bother me now. I'm working on my writing skills. It is a challenge. It took me three weeks to write a letter a while ago. I could have asked my wife to write it for me, but it was a matter of pride to write it for myself. This challenged me to ask for help again. It was disheartening for a start. I blew something I was given to read out, but my attitude's changed a lot since then. I have accepted and thank God for the way he has made me. I have committed myself to Him and He'll work it out. I hope to go to Bible College. I will need better writing skills there. This is my long term goal.

The reading programme has definitely helped me. It has been excellent. The help has been encouraging and has built me up. I have not been looked down on. Attitudes in society have changed too. I remember when I was in the army, in 1976, I shared my problem with a lady. She nearly fell over. Because I spoke so well she couldn't believe me. I am now on the Advisory Committee for the reading programme. I represent the students. I am there to convey the feelings of a student. I feel it is a real honour and a privilege. I have concern about the problem of funding and support for the programme, because it is important that the programme carries on."

PART VI

RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING OUT OF THIS REPORT

The following recommendations arise out of the work undertaken in putting this report together. These are that:

1. Any future research be of a participatory nature with ARLA and ARLA programmes. ARLA programmes must be involved at all stages of the research, including planning and implementation.

2. ARLA sets up a standardised system of keeping statistical data within programmes, so that national trends can be easily monitored. Figures should be kept annually, preferably in April to follow the pattern set by Rosalie Somerville and could cover the following areas:

   new students
   students: withdrawing, achieving aims, or not achieving aims
   age ranges of students
   employed/unemployed
   students who gained employment while studying
   Maori students
   ethnic origins of Polynesian students
   ESL students
   tutors
   age ranges of tutors
   monitoring the drop-out rate of students

3. The Government makes further funding available to extend the network of paid local coordinators. Each thirty five to fifty students in a programme warrants a full-time position. The job cannot be carried out adequately with less. A pattern for the extension of this assistance needs to be established - e.g., 10 full-time equivalent positions granted each year until the need is covered. This needs to be done in consultation with ARLA and polytechnic principals.

4. ARLA continues to develop its bi-cultural approach.

5. A nation-wide research programme be set up to investigate the extent of the incidence of adult non-literacy in New Zealand.

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Otago Adult Literacy Project: Records.

Notes.

1. Copies of all major papers are now filed with the Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation in Wellington.
2. Rosalie Somerville's files are now housed in the Alexander Turnbull Museum in Wellington.
3. The files from the National Council of Adult Education are kept in the National Archives in Wellington.

APPENDIX I

UNOFFICIAL RECORDS OF READING SCHEMES 1979/84

April 1979

50 Schemes surveyed 50 schemes responded

How many students are working with tutors at present	1218
How many students are waiting for a tutor	217
Total number of students helped to April 1979	2078
How many tutors working	1062
How many tutors waiting	300

Total students since schemes started

M 1353 F 725 Total 2078

Age groups
15-19: 582 25-29: 348 40-49: 123 60+:15
20-24: 510 30-39: 290 50-59: 42 ESL:150

Tutor course: 142
Total tutors trained: 1964

Current students:
M 767 F 451 Total 1218
Students waiting: 217

Current tutors:
M 147 F 915 Total 1062
Tutors waiting: 300

April 1980

Students working with tutor at present	1502
How many new students have contacted schemes since 1/4/79	1406
How many students have left since 1/4/79	595
How many students are resting but may return later	119
How many students are waiting for a tutor	163
Total number of students helped since 1974	3484
How many tutors working at present	1301
How many tutors have joined since 1/4/79	980
How many tutors have left since 1/4/79	280
How many tutors are resting but may return later	253

82 schemes
3000 tutors
3495 students
7 TI's have .5 salaries
$6000 budget for adult reading for NCAE

July 1981 Survey

72/90 schemes replied

Students working with a tutor at present	1583
New students contacted since 1/4/80	1509
Students who have left since 1/4/80	725
Students resting but who may return	176
Students waiting for a tutor	112
Tutors working with a student at present	1364
New tutors who have joined schemes since 1/4/80	1204
Tutors who have left since 1/4/80	398
Tutors resting but who may return	263
Tutors waiting for a student	550

These figures include some ESL students

April 1982

4000 tutors trained
5000+ students helped
1/3 women
1/2 under 25

8/9/84
6000 trained tutors
7500 students interviewed
2000 current pairs
1/2 between 17 and 24

28/10/84
9000 students total
5800 tutors

APPENDIX II

NOTES ON BACKGROUND TO NCAE INVOLVEMENT WITH ADULT LITERACY MOVEMENT - JUNE 1979

21 August 1974	Council approved national seminar
? 1974	Working Party on Adult Literacy mooted. Delayed in 1975
27 November 1974	Meeting with Minister, Mr. P. Amos
May 1975	Appointment of Project Officer to work with "disadvantaged adults, especially those with reading difficulties" was listed in Draft Programme for Expansion.
March 1976	Statement to Minister "issued" - re above need.
19-21 March 1976	Tatum Park Seminar "Assisting Adults with Reading Problems", 31 participants reflecting whole range of involvement in the field at this time.
1976 NCAE	Approached McKenzie Education Foundation.
15 February 1977	Meeting with McKenzie Education Foundation.
18 April 1977	McKenzie grant for 3 year salary provision for project officer approved.
3 November 1977	New Policy Submissions for 1978/79 - first priority was for six new equivalent posts for trainer organizers.
1 February 1978	Rosalie Somerville took up appointment as Adult Reading Assistance Officer with NCAE.
1 May 1978	First meeting of Adult Reading Advisory Committee.
5 May 1978	Deputation from Adult Reading Advisory Committee of Council to present submissions to Minister, Mr. Gandar - paid co-ordinator positions.
3 October 1978	New Policy proposals for 1979/80. Third priority for a minimum of Government assistance to voluntary adult reading schemes in form of initial $300 setting-up and $900 for training.
27 March 1979	Director-General met with Adult Reading Advisory Committee to discuss - paid positions for co-ordinators - guaranteed training opportunities, - training opportunities within existing regulations for Adult Basic Education.
May 1979	Follow-up letters to Department re March meeting, 2-3 day course at Rossmore House.
September 1979	Week long course at Lopdell House. Course Director Russell Aitken. Outcome?

APPENDIX III

LIST OF QUESTIONS SENT TO ALL SCHEMES

1. What event led up to the formation of your group?
2. When was your scheme started?
3. When did you personally become involved?
4. When did you become a coordinator?
5. Who coordinated the scheme before you? Dates?
6. What agencies supported the development of your scheme?
7. How were students attracted?
8. Who ran the training courses? (Names and addresses of people who you think made a significant contribution to your scheme and who may be able to help me.)
9. How is your scheme organised? eg. paid coordinator?, administrative committee?
10. Progress in achieving payment for coordinator? Does your group think this is necessary?
11. Growth of scheme?
12. Areas of learning covered by your scheme?
13. Statistics held by your scheme?
14. Do you have a scrapbook you would be prepared to photocopy or lend me to search out all the above details for myself if need be?
15. Anything I have missed?

Nosey aren't I, but I do want to do a very thorough job.

Please send all information to:
Kathy Hill
54 Grigg Street
Ashburton

Thanks!

APPENDIX IV

A DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF THE 1988 TIMARU FIGURES

Tutors Currently Working
108 tutors working 73

7 of these are working with 2 students at present.
4 " " " " " 3 " " "
1 " " " " " 4 " " "
1 " " " " " 5 " " "

3 are working with numeracy students
9 are working with re-learning students
1 tutor is working with a small group

17 tutors have worked for under 1 year and had 1 student
1 tutor has worked for under 1 year and has had 2 students

12 tutors have worked for 1 year and have had 1 student
6 " " " " 1 " " " " 2 students
2 " " " " 1 " " " " 3 students
1 " " " " 1 " " " " 6 students

10 " " " " 2 " " " " 1 student
2 " " " " 2 " " " " 2 students

1 " " " " 3 " " " " 1 student
5 " " " " 3 " " " " 2 students
2 " " " " 3 " " " " 3 students

1 " " " " 4 " " " " 1 student
1 " " " " 4 " " " " 2 students
2 " " " " 4 " " " " 3 students
1 " " " " 4 " " " " 4 students
1 " " " " 4 " " " " 5 students

1 " " " " 5 " " " " 1 student
3 " " " " 5 " " " " 2 students
1 " " " " 5 " " " " 4 students

1 " " " " 6 " " " " 1 student
2 " " " " 6 " " " " 2 students
4 " " " " 6 " " " " 3 students
1 " " " " 6 " " " " 4 students
1 " " " " 6 " " " " 6 students

1 " " " " 7 " " " " 3 students
1 " " " " 7 " " " " 5 students
2 " " " " 7 " " " " 6 students
1 " " " " 8 " " " " 2 students
1 " " " " 8 " " " " 3 students
2 " " " " 8 " " " " 4 students
2 " " " " 8 " " " " 6 students
1 " " " " 9 " " " " 18 students
1 " " " " 10 " " " " 3 students

6 tutors are waiting and they are situated in the out reach areas

Some Interesting Facts About Current Tutors

87 female
21 male
23 situated in out reach areas
77 not in the paid work force
41 hold full time jobs
20 are aged between 18 - 30
66 " " " 30 - 55
22 are aged 55 and over

Students Who are Currently Working

20 students have worked for under 1 year and had 1 tutor
1 student has worked for under 1 year and had 2 tutors

29 students have worked for 1 year and had 1 tutor
2 " " " " 1 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " " " 1 " " " 3 tutors

9 " " " " 2 " " " 1 tutor
6 " " " " 2 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " " " 2 " " " 3 tutors

4 " " " " 3 " " " 1 tutor
5 " " " " 3 " " " 2 tutors
2 " " " " 3 " " " 3 tutors
1 " " " " 3 " " " 5 tutors

4 " " " " 4 " " " 1 tutor
1 " " " " 4 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " " " 4 " " " 3 tutors
1 " " " " 4 " " " 4 tutors
1 " " " " 4 " " " 6 tutors

3 " " " " 5 " " " 1 tutor
1 " " " " 5 " " " 5 tutors

2 " " " " 6 " " " 1 tutor
1 " " " " 6 " " " 2 tutors

3 " " " " 7 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " " " 7 " " " 5 tutors

1 " " " " 8 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " " " 8 " " " 3 tutors
1 " " " " 8 " " " 4 tutors
1 " " " " 8 " " " 5 tutors
1 " " " " 8 " " " 7 tutors

1 " " " " 10 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " " " 10 " " " 5 tutors

Some Interesting Facts About Present Students

32 female
77 male
3 in 50's (1 female 2 males)
2 in 60's all literacy beginners
4 in 50's literacy beginners
9 specifically for drivers or heavy traffic licence
4 mildly handicapped for survival literacy and social support
8 students have moved on to work on correspondence courses with their tutors
29 students in their 30's tend to be men, well motivated, reading literacy skills to further their promotion at work or to enable them to become self-employed
Women late 20's to 30's tend to be wives and mothers at home whose application depends on the freedom the family allows them
14 students come from ACCESS schemes
8 students working on trade examinations
2 on institute technology
1 on Massey course
4 students whose attendance is noticeably erratic but who have continued to come and go over several years

Students Who Have Left The Scheme

223 of these

6 didn't start at all

34 worked for under 1 year and had 1 tutor

64 worked for 1 year and had 1 tutor
10 " " 1 " " " 2 tutors
12 " " 1 " " " 3 tutors

25 " " 2 " " " 1 tutor
7 " " 2 " " " 2 tutors
11 " " 2 " " " 3 tutors

13 " " 3 " " " 1 tutor
4 " " 3 " " " 2 tutors
5 " " 3 " " " 3 tutors
2 " " 3 " " " 4 tutors

6 " " 4 " " " 1 tutor
3 " " 4 " " " 2 tutors
2 " " 4 " " " 3 tutors
1 " " 4 " " " 6 tutors

1 " " 5 " " " 1 tutor
1 " " 5 " " " 3 tutors

4 " " 6 " " " 1 tutor
1 " " 6 " " " 2 tutors
3 " " 6 " " " 4 tutors

1 " " 7 " " " 2 tutors
1 " " 9 " " " 3 tutors

Some Interesting Facts About Students Who Have Left The Scheme

56 left town
31 decided that they weren't ready
94 had achieved their goals
17 because of other pressures

Tutors Who Left the Scheme

223 of these

39 tutors didn't take students

22 worked for 1 year and had 1 student

34 " " 2 " " " 1 student
11 " " 2 " " " 2 students
16 " " 2 " " " 3 students

20 " " 3 " " " 1 student
11 " " 3 " " " 2 students
5 " " 3 " " " 3 students
12 " " 3 " " " 4 students

8 " " 4 " " " 1 student
10 " " 4 " " " 2 students
6 " " 4 " " " 3 students
2 " " 4 " " " 4 students
6 " " 4 " " " 5 students
1 " " 4 " " " 7 students

2 " " 5 " " " 1 students
5 " " 5 " " " 2 students
2 " " 5 " " " 3 students
3 " " 5 " " " 4 students

2 " " 6 " " " 1 student
2 " " 6 " " " 2 students
1 " " 6 " " " 5 students

2 " " 7 " " " 1 student
1 " " 7 " " " 3 students

Some Interesting Facts About Tutors Who Have Left the Scheme

39 did the training for work purposes
44 left town
109 gave up because of other commitments
7 died

APPENDIX V

ARLA COMPUTER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

COMPUTER SURVEY

June 1988

A. NAME OF SCHEME

1.Does your scheme use computers? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please answer the following:

B. EQUIPMENT

1.How long have you had a computer? Approx _____

2.Number of computers

3.Type of computers Make and model _____

PC (tapes) ☐

PC (floppy disk) ☐

XT (hard disk) ☐

XT (fast speed) ☐

4.Do you have a printer? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes please give brand name and type. _____

C. SOFTWARE PROGRAMMES:

1.Is your computer used for teaching purposes and/or administration?

2.What do you use for your literacy work? eg word processor, spelling programmes, data base.

3.Do you use games in your teaching programme? Please name games used.

4.How succesful do you consider the computer compared with conventional means of teaching?

5. Do you supplement the computer with conventional means of teaching? How?

6. How much time per week does each student spend on the computer on average?

☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 20+ hours

a) What percentage of total time working is this?

b) Does this vary? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, how much? _____

7. How do you deal with mistakes?

8. Do students work together with tutor, or independently, at computer?

9. Do you make up your own programmes? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what are they?

10. Are you prepared to share these programmes? Yes ☐ No ☐

D. ADMINISTRATION

Records:

1. Do you use the computer to assess student progress? Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Do you keep records of students and tutors on computer? Yes ☐ No ☐

E. STATISTICS

Tutors working with computers:

1. Males ☐
   Females ☐
   Total ☐

2. Ages:

☐ 15-19 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-40 ☐ 40+

3. Background with computers:

a) Training (if any)

b) Do they suscribe to computer magazines? eg Bits and Bytes

Yes ☐ No ☐

Students using computers:

1. Male ☐

Female ☐

Total ☐

2. Age range

☐ 15-19 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-40 ☐ 40+

F. Any comments?

Would you like a copy of the results? Yes ☐ No ☐

Thanks for your help

Please return to Kathy Hill
54 Grigg Street
Ashburton

by 31st July 1988.

ADDRESS FOR SURVEY RESULTS: